



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Mar 22, 2011

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Riverside Rallies to Send Aid to Sister City -- Sendai, Japan

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – Following a meeting last week to discuss aid to Riverside's sister city Sendai, Japan, community leaders reconvened yesterday at City Hall to announce their initial \$250,000 goal had been reached and set a new stretch goal of \$1 million.

Mayor Pro Tem Chris MacArthur said with the City of Riverside's proposed donation of \$100,000 and the County's proposed donation of \$50,000, the immediate target of \$250,000 would be met. He said that ongoing impacts from the disaster and threats from the nuclear situation are raising the stakes and, "the community now needs to stretch and double its efforts". In the next two weeks, Riverside will work to raise another \$250,000. Contributions made to the Red Cross and other relief organizations by the Riverside community are expected to raise the remaining \$500,000.

Noting the urgency of the situation, Riverside Mayor Ron Loveridge said, "The time to act is now. Riverside stands ready to help". He asked for each member of the Riverside community to contribute \$10.

Mayor Loveridge read a letter from Sendai's Mayor Emiko Okuyama expressing her "deepest gratitude to the people of Riverside for their prayers and support ..." Reporting heavy damage to infrastructure and services she stated, "We realize that the relationship with Riverside is invaluable to Sendai and we would very much appreciate any kind of monetary assistance the city could provide us with."

Community leaders provided updates on the various fundraising efforts around the City. Fire Chief Steve Earley said firefighters will be launching a "Fill the Boot" campaign on Mar 31, and Apr 1 and 3. UCR students have put together a "Hugs for Japan" campaign to garner funds from the student population. The Martin Luther King High School Kingsmen Band will be headlining at a benefit performance on April 1 at the Grove Community Church and the Riverside Philharmonic will be dedicating its April 9 concert as a Sendai benefit.

Riverside's historic Mission Inn will light up the Bell Tower of the Mission Inn with blue lights—the color of Sendai—as a symbol of solidarity. Riverside City Hall will join this effort by lighting its Grier Pavilion in blue nightly as a symbol of support.

The Riverside Community asks you to donate now at www.riversideca.gov/sendairelief. Donations may also be made in person at City Hall in the Mayor's office, 3900 Main Street,

7th Floor, Riverside, CA 92522. Donated funds will be held in a separate account designated for Sendai, Japan to be given directly to officials in Sendai for their recovery efforts.

For additional information, please call (951) 826-5311.